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SENATE RESOLUTION

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WHEREAS, The members of the Illinois Senate are saddened to learn of the death of Michael George Cantonis of Tarpon Springs, Florida, formerly of Park Ridge, who passed away on November 17, 2009; and

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WHEREAS, He was born on the Island of Symi, Greece on May 25, 1915, to George Michael and Chrysanthi Giallourakis Cantonis; at the age of 17, Michael left Greece for the United States, arriving through Ellis Island in 1934; he first worked for his uncles, The Giallourakis Brother's Sponge Company, in Florida before moving to New York in 1938; soon after moving to New York, Michael borrowed \$1,000 and founded ACME Sponge & Chamois Company, Inc.; in 1947 He married the love of his life, Anastasia Harras, and they moved to Chicago; and

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WHEREAS, The couple settled in Park Ridge, where they raised their three children, George, James, and Cynthia; in 1977, after 30 years in Chicago, he moved his company to Tarpon Springs, Florida, to be adjacent to the location of the existing chamois manufacturing plant and natural sponge operation; until his final days, he remained active in ACME and also served as Chairman of the Board of the Cantonis Company; in addition to his roles as founder and president of ACME and Chairman of the Board of the Cantonis Company, his other

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1 career-long commitment was to several philanthropic
2 organizations; and

3 WHEREAS, His many philanthropic interests included an
4 endowment fund to Hellenic College Holy Cross for a Chair in
5 Byzantine Studies; an endowment fund at the University of
6 Florida in Gainesville for the Department of Greek Studies;
7 Morton Plant Hospital; Berkeley Preparatory School; Tarpon
8 Springs Public Library; Helen Ellis Memorial Hospital; Ruth
9 Eckerd Hall; UPARC; The Greek Orthodox Ecumenical Patriarchate
10 in Istanbul, Turkey; the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese in New
11 York; St. Andrew's Greek Orthodox Church of Chicago; and St.
12 Nicholas Greek Orthodox Church of Tarpon Springs; he
13 established the Michael G. Cantonis Sanctuary Fund at St.
14 Michael the Archangel in Lecanto, in order to build a new
15 church and community center; he made numerous other donations
16 to churches, hospitals, schools, and art centers throughout the
17 United States as well as donations to his native Island of
18 Symi, Greece; and

19 WHEREAS, Throughout his lifetime, he received the
20 following recognitions and honors; Officion (Award) of Archon
21 Ieromnimon of the Ecumenical Patriarchate by the late Patriarch
22 Demetrios; Medal of the Holy Cross of the Crusaders of the Holy
23 Sepulchre by the late Patriarch of Jerusalem, Venediktos; Gold
24 Medal of the 50th Anniversary of the St. Andrews Community of

1 Chicago, where he served for 24 years as Treasurer, Vice
2 President, President, and Chairman of the Board; Declaration as
3 a Great Benefactor and the Key to the City of Tarpon Springs
4 Award; Ellis Island Medal of Honor; and numerous awards from
5 the University of Florida; he was an Archon of the Ecumenical
6 Patriarchate in America, a member of Leadership 100 of the
7 Greek Orthodox Archdiocese, and an Executive committee member
8 of the Archdiocesan Council; and

9 WHEREAS, In 1946, he was raised a Master Mason in New York
10 City before transferring to Hellenic Lodge No. 1084 A.F & A.M.
11 in Chicago, a 63 year Mason; he was also a perpetual member in
12 the York Rite bodies and Medinah Shrine in Chicago; and

13 WHEREAS, He was predeceased by his younger brothers, Ted G.
14 Cantonis and Constantine G. Cantonis; and

15 WHEREAS, Michael Cantonis is survived by his loving and
16 devoted wife of 63 years, Anastasia Harras; his three children
17 and their spouses, George and Maria Cantonis, James Cantonis,
18 and Cynthia Cantonis Heller and Steve Heller; his four
19 grandsons, Michael, Spiro, Matthew, and Leigh; his two
20 granddaughters, Anastasia and Alexandra; and his younger
21 brother, Carl G. Cantonis; therefore, be it

22 RESOLVED, BY THE SENATE OF THE NINETY-SIXTH GENERAL

1 ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that we mourn, along with
2 his family and friends, the passing of Michael Cantonis; and be
3 it further

4 RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be
5 presented to the family of Michael Cantonis as a symbol of our
6 sincere sympathy.